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President of WorldSkills International, Simon Bartley, holding an exclusive *FE Week* t-shirt at the WorldSkills 2011 closing ceremony.

[See page 5 for more](#)

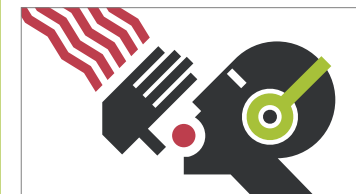
## Prof Wolf Profile



Professor Alison Wolf talks to *FE Week* about her review and more

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## FE Week agitator



The future for our young people is anything but bright.

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# Funding simplification delayed

**FE Week Exclusive**

**Nick Summers**

[@summersnicholas](#)

## Skills Funding Agency listen to feedback from FE providers and delay roll-out until 2013/14

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) has delayed full implementation of its 'simplified' adult skills funding system until 2013/14.

Colleges and training organisations will have to use the current methodology in 2012/13, but are advised to plan for the upcoming changes in what has been called a 'dual running' period.

The agency had originally planned to implement the new funding system in 2012/13.

However, a spokesperson from the SFA said that the timing of the new methodology was always "subject to further engagement with the sector".

"We have engaged and have listened to the feedback from providers and will implement a dual running approach in 2012/13," the spokesperson said.

"Colleges and training organisations will continue to be paid for the year in accordance with the current methodologies, but will also have sight of the new methodologies in order to plan for the changes in the year ahead (2013/14)."

The most recent reference to a 2012/13 launch can be found in a SFA

policy update titled 'Proposals for Funding Simplification' published on April 27.

It states: "This paper sets out the proposals for simplifying the Skills Funding Agency's funding system in 2012/13. Proposals include a simplified rates and funding formula, as well as initial thinking about a new earnings and payment process for providers."

It later shows a draft table of the simplified rate structure and plans to retain area cost uplift.

A further presentation given by David Hughes, National Director of College & Provider Services at the SFA on November 17, 2010 outlines plans for a simplified rates system, simplified data returns and removal of provider factor, excluding area costs in 2012/13.

The SFA said in a previous statement to *FE Week* that they never intended to roll out the new methodology in 2012.

A spokesperson from the SFA said: "There isn't any delay. We have always been committed to start the funding simplification process in 2011/12 so that we are ready for roll

out of dual running in 2012/13 and full implementation in 2013/14."

The delay, announced in 'A new streamlined funding system for adult skills' on October 10, proposes a simplified funding system which includes a single Adult Skills Budget for all colleges and training providers, as well as a single methodology for providing them with funds.

The document also suggests a standard 'rates matrix' which would fund all provision, including apprenticeships, and a funding system based on delivery in Individualised Learner Record (ILR) returns.

The SFA argues that the new system will be "a more open and transparent mechanism for determining funding" and mean that colleges can work more easily with their local communities.

The latest report states: "Any new approach must be fair and transparent. It must also recognise the diverse needs of adults, some of whom face barriers of disadvantage and disability, and in addition it must safeguard public funds."

The document also confirms that the area cost and disadvantage uplifts

will be kept in the new simplified funding formula.

The SFA suggests that because colleges and training organisations will no longer be required to record guided learning hour (glh) data, administration costs will also be reduced.

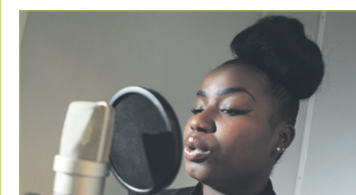
However, Beej Kaczmarczyk, Director of Funding at Sector Training, said: "Serious questions should be asked as to whether this delayed 19 plus funding reform is worth implementing. In places it adds complexity, others inconsistency, and many questions remain unanswered."

The adult skills provision is currently funded through the Demand Led Funding (DLF) methodology introduced in 2008/09.

Classroom and workplace learning are divided in the current methodology, but would be combined under the new funding system. Providers would be paid using the monthly method.

The new SFA report follows a BIS-led consultation 'A Simplified FE and Skills Funding System and Methodology' and the response in 'FE - New Horizon, Investing in Skills for Sustainable Growth' published in 2010.

## Campus round-up



Trafford College's Misha Bryan proves a star on X-Factor

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## Fear for more data



Despite Government reassurances delegates fear more data demands

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## Just a bit of fun!



Enter our caption competition to win an *FE Week* mug

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*inside...*





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# Official figures for youth unemployment reach close to one million for the first time

**Nick Reinis**  
*@fenickr*

A new approach to combat youth unemployment has been revealed as critics round on the government over record numbers of 16 to 24-year-olds out of work.

Figures from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) have revealed there were 991,000 unemployed 16 to 24-year-olds from June to August.

Although the total is lower than the one million mark which was suggested by many last week, it is an increase of 74,000 on the three months to May 2011.

The number takes into account people in full-time education who are looking for employment and are available to work.

Excluding those people would put the figure at 721,000 unemployed 16 to 24 year olds, up by 78,000.

Employment Minister Chris Grayling said: "It is clear that we are seeing the effect of the international economic crisis on the UK labour market."

To combat the issue, Mr Grayling has announced the creation of a sector-based work academy, run through Jobcentre Plus (JCP).

They will offer training, work experience and a guaranteed job interview to up to 50,000 people in the next two years, with many going to young people.

Together with the Work Programme and the Government's Work Experience scheme it will mean support for up to 150,000 young people over the next few months and 250,000 people in the next two years.

Sector-based work academies will operate in industries on local labour market demand, including construction, contact centres, hospitality and retail.

When a business has a vacancy to fill, JCP will provide them with candidates and training, while the business provides work experience.

At the end, the unemployed person will have an interview where they will "hopefully" get a job. If not, they will have the skills and experience they have gained to add to their CV to help them to get a job next time.

Mr Grayling said: "Sector-based work academies are the next key part of our strategy to tackle youth unemployment."

"With training, work experience and a guaranteed interview, they will put people at the front of the queue for vacancies that employers are looking to fill."

Among those onboard with the government's new scheme is Judith Nelson, UK Personnel Director for Tesco.

She said: "We are always on the lookout for new talented individuals to join our teams. Sector-based work academies are a great way to find these new people from within communities we serve and provide skills and experience to succeed."

Meanwhile, Angela Williams, British Gas HR Director, said: "The Sector-based work academy scheme is a great initiative."

"It's helped us find good people we can take on and train, giving them the skills to insulate our customers' homes and reduce their energy bills."

The government has also announced other measures which it says will help youth unem-

ployment, including 13 new University Technical Colleges and investing in apprenticeships.

However, critics are calling on the government to rethink a number of their policy decisions.

Sally Hunt, general secretary of the University and College Union (UCU), said: "We hit record youth unemployment levels at the same time financial support for college students has been removed, the cost of a university degree has trebled and Future Jobs Fund has been axed."

"The government needs to urgently rethink these policies and provide the support young people need to get education, training and jobs."

"Otherwise we risk consigning an entire generation to a life with no jobs, no education and no prospects."

Liam Byrne MP, Shadow Work and Pension Secretary, has hit out at the figures.

He said: "(The) figures are the clearest proof yet that the Government's decision to cut too far, and too fast, is hurting and just not working. Unemployment is soaring, and more young people are out of work than ever before."

David Miliband MP, chair of the ACEVO Commission on Youth Unemployment, said the issue is a "challenge for the whole of the country".

He added: "Youth unemployment scars people for life, particularly if it is prolonged, and at (these) levels it will be costing the country millions of pounds a week."

"Our aim is to understand the problems we face, arrive at the right solutions, and then act. We must not let the scourge of unemployment leave a permanent mark on the hundreds of thousands of young people living through it today."

# UTCs unveiled but unions issue warning

**Nick Reinis**  
*@fenickr*

Thousands of students can now study at specialist technical colleges, but critics are warning of a two-tier education system.

The government has announced 13 new University Technical Colleges (UTCs) are due to be opened between 2012 and 2014. Two UTCs are already open, with three more in an advanced stage of their development.

They will offer full-time courses to 14 to 19-year-olds, focusing on specialisms such as engineering and science technologies.

They are being backed by more than 130 employers, including such household names as Rolls-Royce and the Royal Navy.

One UTC will be based at the Silverstone race circuit, in Northamptonshire, following a partnership between the track, alongside Tresham College of Further and Higher Education and The University of Northampton.

Meanwhile, the government has also announced 55 new free schools, including a 16-19 sixth form. The London Academy of Excellence, in Newham, is being set up by Brighton College with other independent schools, including Eton College.

Education Secretary Michael Gove said: "UTCs are a key part of the government's drive

to provide school leavers with the technical knowledge and skills that industry demands."

Lord Kenneth Baker, the co-founder of Baker Dearing Educational Trust (BDT), which has been working to develop UTCs, said: "UTCs will help our economic growth."

"10,000 young people will attend the eighteen UTCs by 2015 - a great beginning. They will combine outstanding hands-on learning with an excellent academic education - leading to unrivalled career opportunities."

All are backed by a university, with many aided by a college. Julian Gravatt, assistant chief executive of the Association of Colleges, said: "UTCs are an interesting new set of institutions for young people as they will equip them with the right knowledge and the relevant skills for the future."

"We're delighted that so many colleges have the chance to put this into effect with this latest announcement."

However, unions have criticised UTCs, saying they could create two-tier education system and could narrow education opportunities. Chris Keates, general secretary of the NASUWT, said "greater commitment to vocational education is particularly important" at a time of record high unemployment levels amongst school and college leavers.

However, he said: "The establishment of UTCs risks diverting funding from existing

school and college provision and could narrow the range of educational opportunities available for young people in an area.

"The development of UTCs could result in young people being encouraged to make decisions about their future learning at too early a stage and in a way that could reduce their employment chances later on."

"Many 14 year olds simply will not be ready for such life-changing decisions. Employers need to put their money where their mouths are by contributing properly to funding vocational training opportunities and by providing decent job opportunities for young people when they leave school and college."

Sally Hunt, general secretary of the University and College Union (UCU) said UTCs "may sound great on paper" but could result in students, particularly from working class backgrounds, being "channelled in to vocational subjects" and their wealthier contemporaries are encouraged to pursue academic paths.

She said: "UTCs are likely to offer similar courses and curriculum to further education colleges and we may see ever decreasing funding diverted to new projects with considerable costs to colleges currently providing key vocational skills."

For a full list of the University Technical Colleges, see [www.feweek.co.uk](http://www.feweek.co.uk)



# AoC 16-18 recruitment survey 'reveals major concerns'

**Nick Reinis**

@fenickr

Half of colleges have seen a drop in enrolment figures, with the blame partly placed on the loss of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

A survey by the Association of Colleges (AoC) of 182 colleges shows 49 per cent are reporting falling numbers of 16-19-year-olds, compared to last year.

It also shows a national drop of 0.1 per cent, the first time in 15 to 20 years the figure has fallen, with 46 colleges reporting a dip between five to 15 per cent.

Colleges believe unaffordable transport, combined with the abolition of the EMA and increased competition for student numbers among school and college sixth forms, have been the main causes for a decline.

The survey is further evidence supporting the findings from two surveys - conducted by Lsect - and published in *FE Week*. The first showed that 105 colleges forecast an initial total shortfall of 20,319 students for this academic year.

Fiona McMillan, president of the AoC and principal of Bridgwater College in Somerset, said that at her own college EMA provided students with about £1,000 per year. Now, there is only £152 per year available for students.

She said: "We are all aware that funding is tight. But these young people are our future and we must consider our investment in them.

"We would all regret a situation where



*Fiona McMillan, President of the AoC*

young people miss out and then become the so-called lost generation."

Ms McMillan said the new 16-19 bursary, which replaced the EMA, is "better than nothing" but in terms of what it provides, "there is a big gap". To cope, her college - like many others - has subsidised the cost.

She is also concerned colleges will miss out on vital funding, adding: "We are paid by our student numbers. So it's an important issue for us."

Martin Doel, chief executive of the AoC, said some of the changes could be due to demographics - with a drop of 40,000 in the 16-18 age group. He added: "It is a complex picture. The decline in college enrolment by students on Level 1 courses may be partially explained by improvements in school teaching.

"What is clear is a significant number of member colleges are concerned that financial constraints are preventing students from pursuing preferred courses at their institution of choice and there is a risk of vulnerable groups becoming disengaged from education."

Andy Forbes, principal at Hertford Regional College, said they are "about five per cent down" on 16-18 enrolment from last year.

He said: "We're now projecting a figure of just under 2,600 against our target of 2,719.

"We have experienced a particular decline in Level 2 enrolments and at the furthest reaches of our catchment area, which stretches quite a long way."

Mr Forbes believes there are two factors to blame, adding: "The withdrawal of EMA and the cost of transport from the two ends of our catchment.

"We were not helped by late arrival of concrete information on what funding we had to compensate for loss of EMA and how we could use that funding, which made it difficult to put financial support in place for students and publicise them effectively."

He also said colleges need to work harder to get the message across about the "exceptional quality of provision" they offer, in the face of "growing competition from schools" expanding sixth forms by offering vocational courses.

He added: "The decline of independent careers advice isn't helping young people make good choices at 16 and we in FE are going to have to be a lot more active in ensuring school pupils and parents are made positively aware of the alternatives to staying on at school."

However, the Department for Education spokesman (DfE) said there are "record numbers of 16 and 17-year-olds" in education or training.

He said: "There has been a massive increase in apprenticeships for anyone over 16 to learn a specific trade - 360,000 places in all available in more than 200 careers.

"And we are strengthening vocational education so young people will have high-quality courses open to them which are valued by employers."

The spokesman also said: "We are targeting financial support at students who need it most to get through their studies - through the new £180m a year bursary fund, with further transitional support available for those students who were already drawing the EMA."

Gordon Marsden, Shadow FE and Skills Minister, said the "alarming figures" show the impact of the government's policy to scrap EMA. He said: "The government has left FE colleges facing a double whammy at a time of real economic uncertainty.

"Not only are college finances jeopardised by falling enrolment numbers, but they face the strain of having to try and address the post EMA funding gap, putting extra administrative burdens on them at a time where they claim to be setting them free.

"The government needs to get a grip urgently with a strategy that will help, rather than hinder, FE colleges in addressing young people's employment and skills needs."

AoC said they will repeat the enrolment survey in September 2012.

## Functional Skills avoided

**Nick Summers**

@summersnicholas

Nine out of ten apprenticeship providers are still delivering Key Skills, rather than Functional Skills, according to a recent survey by the Association of Learning Providers (ALP).

The study, which had 173 responses over five working days, found that training providers had a remarkably low level of confidence in the delivery of Functional Skills in apprenticeships.

The figures cast doubt on the effectiveness of Functional Skills, which are due to replace Key Skills completely in October 2012.

John Hayes, Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning, said in a letter to Graham Hoyle, chief executive of AELP on September 28: "I am fully aware that there are issues implementing Functional Skills.

"The provision of maths and English in apprenticeships is being considered in the context of the government's response to the Wolf review and our review of literacy and numeracy provision for adults."

Jill Lanning, chief executive of the Federation of Awarding Bodies, added: "Particularly within apprenticeships and work based settings, we need to continue to discuss what the

issues are and how they can be resolved."

Respondents to the AELP survey include national, regional and local organisations that deliver over 100,000 apprenticeships with financial support by the Skills Funding Agency.

Ron Champion, Director of Cornwall College Business, said: "If the choice were to remain between functional skills and key skills, we would use key skills for the majority of our learners and know that our employers would choose this option too."

The survey found that only eight per cent of respondents were delivering Functional Skills exclusively to their apprentices.

Additional comments to the survey suggested some employers had started using Functional Skills earlier in the year, but were now choosing to revert back to Key Skills.

Mr Champion said: "We have trialled functional skills in two areas, in one the result was similar to the expectations we would have had for key skills, in the other there were extreme difficulties experienced by the learners."

Functional skills were launched in 2010 and teach learners the practical aspects of English, mathematics and ICT which are relevant for work.

AELP says that learners and employers are increasingly disillusioned with the additional teaching requirements and failure rates associated with Functional Skills.

A spokesperson from the AELP said: "Time is running short for providers to be ready, so a decision from the government is needed soon.

"The challenge is to make Functional Skills testing fit for a work based learning environment. Right now, it certainly isn't."

## Colleges fear more data demands



Representatives from the Data Agency and information authority field questions from the floor

**Nick Summers**

@summersnicholas

The government is failing to cut the burden of data collection and bureaucracy, a study has suggested.

Nearly 80 per cent of delegates surveyed at the Autumn College Data Conference last week thought that data demands would continue to increase in the next few years.

The survey, organised by Lsect, found that data demands would increase dramatically for around 41 per cent of respondents.

A further 38 per cent said they thought their data demands would increase a small amount in the future.

In comparison only four per cent thought their data demands would decrease.

David Willetts, Minister of Universities and Science, said in 2009 that reducing the amount of resources spent on data collection was a priority.

He said: "Every college principal I meet tells me they have literally dozens of staff whose job is to collect data for a multiplicity of regulators and funding bodies which is not needed for the good management of the college.

"This is where the savings have to be made."

The survey also showed that nearly 20 per cent of delegates hadn't submitted their Individualised Learner Record (ILR) data return (R02) on time.

Roughly half of respondents said they had completed their R02 without mistakes, while 23 per cent said they had sent their report with a small number of errors.

Rich Williams, Head of the Data Service, clarified at the conference that 687 out of 1,081 providers had submitted their R02 on time.

This means that only 528,464 learners were accounted for in the R02 return.

Read the full report from the Lsect Autumn College Data Conference on page 12 and 13.



*FE Week profile*

# Alison Wolf ~ her story

**Janet Murray**

@jan\_murray

## The Professor of Public Sector Management at King's College London talks to *FE Week*

Alison Wolf says she had “no intention of having anything to do with education.” In fact, when she left university in the early 1970s, she was destined for a career in journalism, having secured a job on the Daily Mail's money pages. But she never made it to the newsroom; her husband was offered a job at the World Bank in Washington so she moved to the other side of the world, where she finished her postgraduate studies and taught research methods in two universities while moonlighting as a journalist.

A random encounter changed everything. She interviewed a man who was setting up a new federal agency, called the National Institute of Education and he offered her a job. “I'd love to say it was my brilliant interviewing technique,” she says modestly. “But actually I think he thought it would be good for them to have a member of staff who was not a product of the American system, that it would bring something they didn't have.”

But going into policy work was “not quite as daft as it sounds,” she says. Having studied Politics, Philosophy and Economics (PPE) at Oxford, Wolf was, essentially, a social scientist with a background in statistics. “I ended up working for the US government on education policy reporting mostly to congressional committees. And actually I had a ball. It taught me how much different political systems can affect the policy-making.”

Wolf, now the Sir Roy Griffiths Professor of Public Sector Management at Kings College, the University of London went on to work for several political think tanks and local authorities on a freelance basis, combining part-time work with bringing up two small children, which she admits was tough but helped her “get very good at working late at night and early in the morning.”

When the family returned to the UK in the mid-1980s (she is married to the economics commentator Martin Wolf) she called a friend who was working at the Institute of Education to see if he knew of any jobs.

There were no vacancies, but he did offer a desk and a phone so she could try and raise herself some research funds, which she did successfully, initially for pedagogical research, some of which related to work-based learning, which she says sparked her interest in FE.

Securing funding from the Nuffield Foundation in the early 1990s for research into the evaluation of GNVQs moved her back into policy. “I'd begun to have some serious

worries and questions and started to become that woman who was always criticising,” she says. “And personally I was getting very uneasy about the way vocational qualification policy was going...whether these qualifications were proving to be worthwhile to people in their adult lives.”

What concerned her most was the introduction of Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications (equivalent to GCSE) that were not fit for purpose, for example hairdressing qualifications that could be taken in school, but did not give young people the necessary skills to do the job. “It was at the point where they [the government] had introduced all these levels and all these targets and it was becoming, you know, like ‘let's shell them like peas.’ I'm sorry, but they are a scandal, they have no place in school curriculum, it's a complete waste of time...” she says crossly. “And what was even worse was that they [the students] were getting GCSE points for them.”

This is typical Wolf. Passionate and driven, she speaks incredibly fast, switching between girlish and excitable to fiery and indignant in seconds.

But her work with the Nuffield Foundation didn't just get her back into policy. It also propelled her into the media spotlight. “That was definitely a baptism of fire stuff because it was the first time I had been on national radio and starting with Today is pretty big,” she recalls.

While now a radio pro (Wolf sometimes presents the Radio 4 show analysis, which looks at the idea and forces that shape public policy) she has never got used to TV. “I've done little bits of television and it's terrifying,” she says, covering her face with her hands (something, like talking fast, she does a lot). “Radio is fine, but when I did the vocational review [the Wolf review], I did the sofa, BBC breakfast and it confirmed my views...I've been asked to do Newsnight and I've said no. I hate television.”

After living on what she calls “soft money” for many years, she was relieved to be offered a job as a “conventional academic” at the Institute of Education (IoE) in the mid-1990s. “So at this point you have this wonderful liberation that you actually have a regular job and you can say what you think without worrying where the next pay cheque is coming from...which is why I get cross about many academics who I think pull punches too much. I mean no one is going to do anything to us as long as we do the academic part of our job properly. I think we ought...” she tails off, as if she has spoken out of turn. “Yes, anyway, where had we got to?”

Later she talks about the “liberation” of being an academic, which allowed her to start writing for think tanks again. “I might as well be open about this...it's a lot easier to write critical pamphlets when you have a full-time job and you do it full-time.”

But writing think pieces about further and higher education (in her case for “centre and centre right” organisations), was about “policy not politics,” she insists. And with a change of government looking likely, it was a deliberate



Picture by Nick Linford

move on her part to position herself in a time of political flux. “I suppose I became more and more aware that if you want to influence government you don't do it by publishing research papers,” she says. “You do it by journalism and by think tank pamphlets. And once a government has been in power for a long time you don't get much purchase on them. If you want to actually get your ideas over to people, you do better with the group that might be going to come in fresh.”

It was a strategy that paid off, and last summer, she received a phone call from the office of the schools minister Nick Gibb inviting her to Westminster for a meeting. “Now I know you never have conversations with the minister, you always have conversations with the minister and 16 civil servants, but I didn't know that then,” she recalls. “I thought I was going in to have an informal conversation with the minister. I turned up to the DfE and was shown up to the 7th floor – which is the ministerial floor – and I sat in a little waiting room and then they said ‘the minister's ready for you know’ and I walked into this room full of people.”

While she admits to being “a bit terrified” about what she was asked to do – a major piece of research on further education, now known as the ‘Wolf review’ – she insisted that it must be done fast. “I said I wanted to do it fast because everything takes forever [in government].”

“If anything that I said was going to be implemented I had to get it to them fast because otherwise by the time they'd got it they would have moved on and been reshuffled and it would be the eve of the next election and be utterly pointless.”

Between August last year and February, Wolf worked around the clock, balancing research around teaching and other commitments to deliver the report, which concluded that while there was some very good practice in the sector, some young people are wasting their time on colleges courses that do not lead to employment or further training.

The report also stressed the need for young people to study a core of academic subjects up until the age of 16.

“I made two important recommendations,” she says. “One was to actually have some truly respected vocational qualifications that people would recognise...and the other thing – which was almost the most important thing to me – was to change the funding system, because I think that it's only when you can get per student funding that you can release the innovation and allow institutions to do interesting things. I think that post 18 funding still badly needs sorting out.”

Since last autumn, Wolf has had little spare time for the things she loves most, like cooking, making jam and relaxing in her flat in Tuscany. Having delivered a major government report in record time, she jokes that her next project is to “have a holiday.”

One of the most significant things she has taken away from the experience, she says, is a greater appreciation of politicians.

“It's made me appreciate them...how unbelievably hard they work and how incredibly difficult it is to be a minister and it has also made me quite clear that actually I'm in the right occupation, I don't want to be a politician and I don't want to be a civil servant, I want to be an academic.”



# WorldSkills leaves lasting legacy

Organisers plan to set up annual UK skills competition after success at London competition

Nick Reinis

@fenickr

With the success of staging the biggest international skills competition still fresh in their minds, organisers of WorldSkills London 2011 are putting plans in place for an annual showcase to help breed Team UK stars of the future.

As the dust settled and the winners made their way home from a stunning closing ceremony on Sunday night, which saw the home team secure their record medal haul, ideas were already being put down for WorldSkills UK.

To be held in the autumn every year, the event would be around 50 per cent smaller than last week's international competition.

Although dates and locations are yet to be finalised, the event would travel to a different area each year to ensure it is as accessible for all as possible.

Behind the plans are the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), Department for Education, National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) and, of course, WorldSkills UK. Jaine Bolton, national director of business development for NAS and official delegate for WorldSkills UK, said: "We think it will be particularly important to give people a single focus.

"We think it will be that combination which really creates a real buzz."

She added: "The ExCel was perfect for an international event. We haven't decided on a venue, but we don't want it to always be in London. We also haven't decided on a scale but roughly 50 per cent of WorldSkills London."

Geoff Russell, chief executive of the SFA, said the success of Team UK would be the "beginning of a new, inspired future for skills excellence" in the UK.

He added: "The legacy of WorldSkills London 2011 will be an annual cycle of skills competitions driving up the standards and status of vocational skills across the country.

"The cycle will culminate in a high profile event bringing together all of the national finals to showcase all that is best in Further Education, the tremendous achievements of learners and the impact of skills and learning on individuals, businesses and the economy."

However, a spokesperson for the SFA told *FE Week*: "The Skills Funding Agency held an event on October 7 to introduce the idea to FE colleges of holding an annual skills competition.

"It was agreed with the FE colleges that more information on this would follow in the coming months and the plan for an annual skills competition would be shared more widely but no public announcement was planned at this stage."

Mrs Bolton also said: "We are exceptionally proud of Team UK, but not just the competitors, the experts, the trainers and the people behind the scenes too. I was really struck by all of the work being done to make everything happen and for it to happen



Pocket Sprocket: Mayor of London, Boris Johnson 'has a go' at changing the back wheel on a Honda motorbike

Photographs: Nick Linford for *FE Week*

smoothly."

Throughout the event, a number of high-profile celebrities and public figures made an appearance, including Prime Minister David Cameron. After touring the event on Day Two, Mr Cameron 'had a go' at mobile robotics and spoke to school and college children from across the UK. He said: "Standing here is so inspiring. To see almost 1,000 young people from more than 50 countries competing to be the best of the best.

"Not just in one skill, but in more than 40 skills from robotics, to web design, from cookery to landscape gardening. It's great too for me that the UK is able to show off the skills and diversity of our own young people. What they have all achieved here sets a fantastic example for other young people."

Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, was taken for a whistlestop tour on Day Three and he showed he was not afraid to get his hands dirty by replacing the tyre of a Honda Fireblade motorcycle, ceremoniously holding aloft the sprocket carrier as he did so.

He said: "It's a great venue and it's very inspiring. I was very slow (at changing the tyre). I can barely repair a bike puncture."

He also praised the hands-on activities on offer, adding: "The motivation is there for these kids (because) they can come along and join up to the different skills. You can change your way - it's about self discovery," he said.

The closing ceremony - held at the nearby O2 Arena - was attended by Skills Minister John Hayes, who said: "These inspirational results are a tribute to the skill, imagination and purposeful pride of our young people.

"Team UK has shown that UK workers and businesses can take on the world and win - but I want many thousands more people in the UK to achieve excellence."

## WorldSkills London 2011 results at a glance

### Top five countries by total medal points

Korea	24 (91 medal points)
Japan	19 (73 medal points)
Switzerland	17 (62 medal points)
Brazil	11 (47 medal points)
UK	12 (46 medal points)

For a full list of results go to:  
[www.worldskills.org](http://www.worldskills.org)

### Team UK: The Breakdown

4 GOLD MEDALS



2 SILVER MEDALS



6 BRONZE MEDALS



### Team UK medal winners

#### Gold Medals

Shane Trevitt (Plumbing and Heating), Philip Green (Bricklaying), Ben Murphy (Cooking), Kirsty Hoadley (Visual Merchandising), Christopher Berridge (Stonemasonry) - Stonemasonry was not considered an official skill as there are too few participants

#### Silver Medals

Ross Varnam (Autobody Repair), Landscape Gardening (Simon Abbott and James Cuffey)

#### Bronze Medals

Ryan Sheridan (Mechanical Engineering Design - CAD), Jake Rambaldini (Welding), John Couldridge (Automobile Technology), Ben Eaton (Car Painting), Adam Bushnell (Joinery), Stuart Millar (Refrigeration and Air Conditioning)



## FE Week expert

# Post codes change lives and make money



“Some of the biggest savings that a college can make are related to retention”

There's an insignificant box in the corner of a room somewhere in the college. Sometimes it's a nice clean room with air-conditioning and sometimes it's in a dusty cupboard along with the odd bucket and broom.

It may look insignificant and quite often it is unloved and occasionally despised. In some colleges it is referred to as a black hole that sucks in all sorts of data that is gathered at huge cost and quite often gets in the way of the day job.

If you had your own private box that contained millions of pounds that could be released if only you could crack the code would you be interested?

This will be a series of short observations on the contents of the box and saving tens if not hundreds of thousands of pounds and; more importantly, changing the lives of some people who could succeed if they had a little extra help. It is not meant to be a supplement to the excellent texts that Nick Linford et al have produced, merely to tease and encourage thought.

The code that I'm referring to here is the postcode. Let's not get bogged down in uplift factors and where the courses are being delivered and all of the other things that are associated with the postcode. Let's look at where people live – real people.

Some of the biggest savings that a college can make are related to retention. If you can retain them then there's a chance of them achieving.

Many colleges run compound reports on attendance; and reference that to individual learning plans together with assessments and if the analysis of all that generates an amber or red traffic light then they can trigger support mechanisms that might enable the college to help the student continue their study and remain a positive statistic.

Yet if the post codes are analysed *before* the

college recruit this year's cohort of students then support mechanisms can be established together with extra vigilance to help the student through the course. However, and at the risk of sounding like a TV ad. “there's more!”.

By doing it this way the college can establish the support before the student journey begins. The premise here is that retention starts from enquiry or application i.e. well before enrolment. Does your college analyse the following by postcode?

- Enquiries to Enrolment – how many enquiries actually become an enrolment?
- Applications to Enrolment – how many applicants become an enrolment?
- Completion – how many complete the course?
- Achievement – how many achieve and at what grade?
- Level of achievement – again, how many achieve and what grade?
- Additional support – how many from a particular post code have required additional support in the past?

If you do then you can establish a strategy to help and support students before they are students, gain brownie points with Ofsted, improve your staff perception of your MIS and maybe, just maybe, change a life.

If you don't then there is a lot of information in the dusty box that is not being used and an even greater number of people who will be pointing at your information system with a crucifix and garlic saying “Black hole, hard work, no return!”

It doesn't have to be that way.

*George Layfield, Senior Manager at Capita and former director of Information Services*

## FE Week expert

# You outsource payroll and IT, Why not Marketing?

Bit controversial this, so controversial that most college marketing departments have had a little warning about us, and, at a certain marketing bash in November you can take part in a workshop to defend yourself against companies like ours. What we do isn't evil, it isn't against the law, and actually works quite well.

**HEALTH WARNING:** Before you read further, we are an education marketing and PR agency, and I make no apology for that. **SHOCK HORROR:** We have expanded into outsourced services. Now you have been warned, read on at your own peril.

A few colleges have taken the marketing outsource leap like Bournemouth & Poole College, Barnfield and Northampton. A few are going through the process like Yeovil, and a few are just sniffing the air to see what's going on.

Lots of colleges outsource their IT and HR so, why not marketing? When a college outsources its marketing, a company like ours takes responsibility for the marketing function.

In our instance that includes everything from research, strategy and planning, to the delivery of marcoms (prospectuses, guides, brochures), PR, advertising, copywriting, social media, websites, event management, and media buying, placement and printing.

Budgets are being squeezed, and squeezed again, and the constant call of ‘more for less’ is a like a broken record that won't stop spinning. Outsourcing is an option. So, what are the downsides?

## Bedding in

An outsourced marketing team is not of the college's culture, every college is different, and the transition period can be a little bumpy. We need to understand personal and political agendas, how things are, how things are usually done etc, and this takes a little time. One senior manager explained that it was rather like steering an iceberg, the top changes course much quicker than the bottom.

## Managing expectations

The agreed scope is the agreed scope - additional work has to be charged for, if the college or a department suddenly needs ad hoc events, additional meetings, new branding or a swift poster, if these weren't agreed at the beginning of the contract, they have to be paid for. So, what are the benefits?

## Focus

Even if a college has its own marketing department (some don't), a reliance on marketing outsourcing frees up in-house personnel for certain responsibilities, so they can play to their strengths. If a college does not have its own marketing department, outsourcing can provide it, lock stock and barrel!



## Discipline

With marketing outsourcing, every discipline is on the table. That is important to consider, because no matter how hard a traditional agency tries to serve its customers, the fact is that it basically exists to sell public relations or production of marketing collateral etc.

An outsourced team has a different objective: Identify and deploy the resources needed, based not on what its in-house talent can produce, but on a strategic analysis of the college's goals, market position and budget. Reduced overheads.

By engaging a marketing outsourcing agency, colleges can significantly reduce overheads. Just ask any of the principals at the colleges who have taken the leap!

## Access to specialist skills

In-house marketing staff may not always have specialist skills, it's a demanding job and often they have to wear lots of different hats, often all at once!

Outsourcing to an experienced marketing team that understands FE not only brings in new ideas and added energy, but also the specialist talents, (like PR, research, digital expertise, copywriting and project management) needed to execute the college's marketing goals.

For these reasons and more, marketing outsourcing delivers real value, bringing in a new level of efficiency and effectiveness to the often daunting task of marketing a whole college offering to what is increasingly a demanding, diverse and often difficult-to-reach audience.

Of course, I'm in PR and run a marketing agency, so I would say that.

However, I'd like to say this too: some colleges really don't need to outsource, in our experience there are some fine college marketers and PROs out there and they are doing a cracking job - you know who you are!

*Ruth Sparkes is managing director at EMPRA @empira*



## FE Week Agitator



**B**leak just got bleaker for youth employment...

Orange no longer uses the tagline “the future’s bright”, good job really, this statement would carry a trading standards warning after last week’s news about unemployment.

The future for our young people is anything but bright. Youth unemployment is at an all time high; nearly one million 16-24 year olds are unemployed in the UK. Doesn’t that news make you feel sick to the bottom of your stomach?

How have we allowed that to happen? It’s not someone else’s problem, it’s ours. As parents, teachers, employers and friends.

This ‘problem’ will soon be on a couch near you; a couch if they’re lucky. A shop doorway if they’re not.

Unemployment at such a young age leads to so many social and cultural problems, and Agitator is not the column for those particular woes. We knew that this horrific situation was coming; we’d seen the signs, quarter after quarter.

What have the answers been from those who govern us?

1. Cut benefits encouraging young people to stay on in further education and gain qualifications (EMA)

2. Scrapped the Future Jobs fund

3. Cut face to face careers services that had access to young people, NEET or not

4. Increased access to apprenticeships for the over 25s and those already in employment

5. Not resolved funding anomalies for those families of those undertaking apprenticeships

6. Cut transport subsidies

7. Unprecedented increases in university fees

You know there are more, it’s so depressing But our Ministers are not depressed; they are audacious (and I don’t mean that in a good way).

In Agitator’s humble opinion audacity is too plentiful in our coalition government, despite these bizarre economies, sold to us as being “tough love” (or perhaps that was meant to be ‘tough, love.’) have actually harmed, irreparably, the futures of our youth.

Senior Tory figures, it seems, are punishing our youth just for being young.

Universities minister, David Willetts said in his speech to the Conservative party conference: “Within 3 miles of Tottenham when the riots broke out there were 3,100 vacancies on the National Apprenticeship website. When we make opportunities available, we expect young

people to take them. There are no excuses.”

Well David, if a family is going to miss out on hundreds of pounds a month because little Johnny is learning to stack shelves at the local corporate giant of a supermarket for just £2.60 an hour; and then replaced once his ‘so called’ apprenticeship ends, perhaps just 12 weeks later... your ‘no excuses’ threat is probably falling on deaf ears.

**“Senior Tory figures, it seems, are punishing our youth just for being young.”**

David, you’re not scaring anyone, you’re just being silly. Stop it and make some good, robust decisions that will make a positive difference to young people and their futures.

Come up with some innovative proposals that don’t punish our youth, show them some love, treat them with respect and support them properly, and, help us, FE colleges and colleagues and the whole FE system to do just that.

Fine words butter no parsnips and they won’t help youth unemployment either.



# ADaM

**“ADaM covers a whole range of different scenarios and proves to our auditors that we are on top of the issues.”**

Head of MIS, Worcester College of Technology



## drakelaneassociates

ADaM is a simple-to-use software reporting tool which allows you to quickly compare data returns within the same academic year to highlight potential data management issues.

Good or bad, it is essential that you know your current position and that you take any necessary remedial action proactively. Over 100 FE providers already do with ADaM.

**Download a trial today.**

**Don't wait for auditors or inspectors to ask the awkward questions!**

Innovative Solutions for Education Management  
[www.drakelane.co.uk](http://www.drakelane.co.uk)

## Protect your reputation

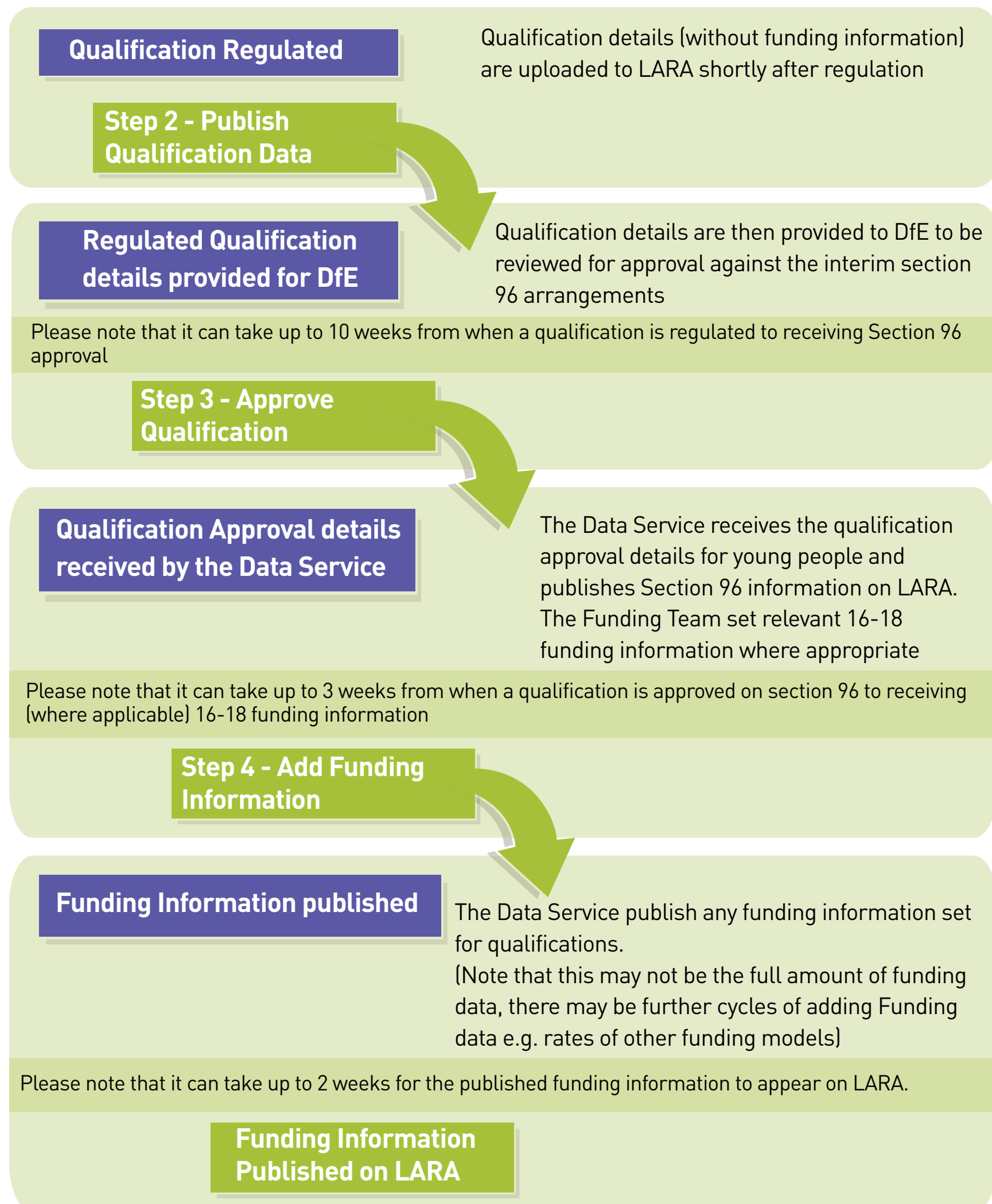




# *FE Week gets technical*

*FE Week* brings you, on one handy **pull-out**, the processes and organisations involved in the Qualification Journey from when a qualification is regulated to acquiring approval under Section 96.

## High level process diagram of the Qualification Journey



## Step-by

First Question:  
Has it been reg

Yes, I have a Qua  
Referenc

Second Question:  
Has it been pub

Yes, I have che  
LARA webs

Third Question:  
Has the qualific  
for over 10 wee  
Section 96 for u

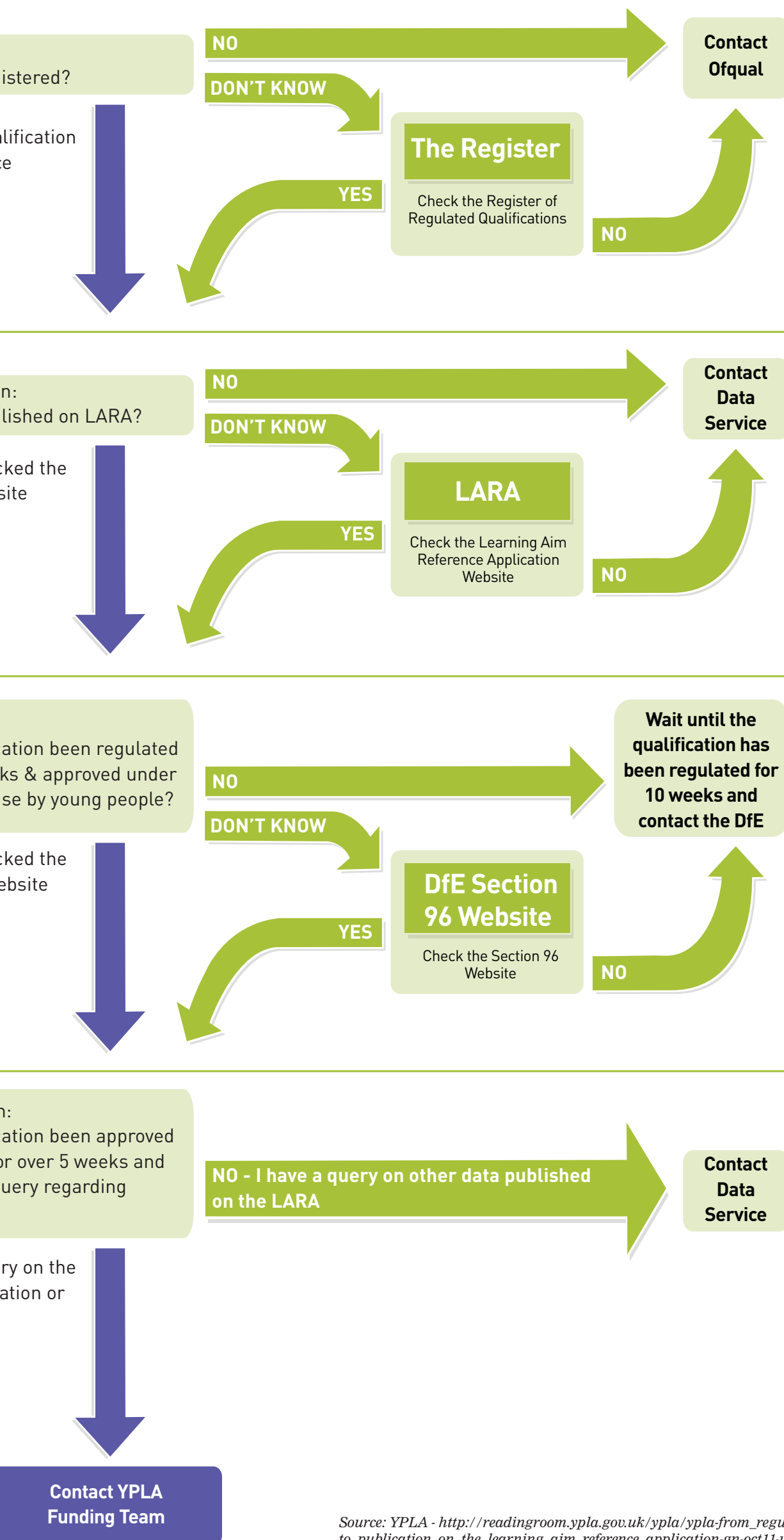
Yes, I have che  
Section 96 we

Fourth Question:  
Has the qualific  
on Section 96 fo  
there is still a q  
funding data?

Yes, I have a que  
funding inform  
data



# 5-step instructions for tracking funding



Source: YPLA - [http://readingroom.ypla.gov.uk/ypla/ypla-from\\_regulation\\_to\\_publication\\_on\\_the\\_learning\\_aim\\_reference\\_application-gn-oct11-v1.pdf](http://readingroom.ypla.gov.uk/ypla/ypla-from_regulation_to_publication_on_the_learning_aim_reference_application-gn-oct11-v1.pdf)

## Who to contact

Below are details of the first place to go to obtain information on the status of a qualification for use by young people at each step of the process. Responses to all queries will be provided in a timely manner.

### Step 1 Ofqual - Provide Regulation Data

To check whether a qualification has been regulated use the following link:  
The Register of Regulated Qualifications  
If you have a specific query regarding Regulation please e-mail Ofqual at:  
[info@ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:info@ofqual.gov.uk)

### Step 2 Data Service - Publish Qualification on LARA

To check whether the qualification has been published on LARA use the following link:  
<https://gateway.imservices.org.uk/sites/lara/Pages/Welcome.aspx>  
Learning Aim Reference Application  
If the qualification has been regulated but is not showing on LARA then please e-mail the Data Service Service Desk at:  
[servicedesk@thedata-service.org.uk](mailto:servicedesk@thedata-service.org.uk)  
If the qualification has been regulated and is showing on LARA but without 16-18 funding values, please do not contact the Service Desk but proceed to Step 3.

### Step 3 Department of Education - Approve Qualification on Section 96

To check whether a qualification has been approved for use by young people and is listed on Section 96 use the following links:  
Section 96 Qualifications  
If you have a specific query regarding Section 96 approval please contact the Department for Education at:  
[section96.mailbox@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:section96.mailbox@education.gsi.gov.uk)  
Please note that it can take up to 6 weeks for a qualification to be processed and sent as a formal request to the DfE for Section 96 approval. On a monthly basis, the DfE process both new qualifications and changes to qualifications for Section 96 approval. Therefore it may take up to 10 weeks from when a qualification is regulated to receiving Section 96 approval or for the Section 96 website to update with any revisions to qualification data.

### Step 4 Young People's Learning Agency - Add Funding Information

If the qualification in question is showing on LARA and has been approved on Section 96 but does not have 16-18 funding values on LARA then please e-mail the YPLA Funding Team at: [cvhfundingqueries@ypla.gov.uk](mailto:cvhfundingqueries@ypla.gov.uk)  
For further guidance on Young Peoples Learning Agency funding policy use the following link:  
<http://www.ypla.gov.uk/aboutus/ourwork/guidance/funding/>  
Please note that it can take up to 5 weeks for the Funding Team to receive the qualification approval data, set where appropriate a funding rate and for the funding information be published on LARA.



# FE Week campus round-up

## Trafford College's Misha B has the X Factor



As millions of people sit down to watch TV talent show *The X Factor*, few would be as nervous as tutors and students at Trafford College.

One of their own, Misha Bryan, has been making waves on the hit ITV programme with a wealth of stunning performances.

Misha, whose version of the Adele classic *Rolling In The Deep* won wide reaching praise from the show's judges last weekend, recently started her second year of the two-year Vocal Artist course at the college's plush Manchester Music Base.

Based in the heart of Manchester city centre, the Music Base has purpose built recording studios, rehearsal spaces and editing suites.

It was launched in 2007 following a £1.5 million refurbishment and has been pivotal in helping to create Misha mania.

Her tutor Leanne Brown said: "Misha has a really polished and confident performing style and she has always been a very natural performer. She has a very strong voice and has taught us a thing or two about putting on a performance."

Leanne also said the college's approach to the course has been an ideal setting for Misha to prepare for her *X Factor* journey.

She added: "Our Vocal Artist course gives

students experience in performing because they have to put on their own concerts as part of their assessment.

"This helps give our students the confidence to perform which has certainly come across throughout Misha's time on the *X Factor* so far."

But how far does Leanne think Misha can go?

She said: "Misha has the potential go to all the way in this competition, although I have warned her that to become a real success she needs to avoid getting caught up in the circus of the show and concentrate on her talents."

However, Misha is not the only college student to star on *The X Factor*. Liverpool Community College student Craig Colton has been an impressive competitor on the show - many tipping him for the top.

Craig studied at the college's Arts Centre, but last week he was wowing the judges with his version of Christina Perri's *Jar of Hearts*.

Staff and students at South Tyneside College, meanwhile, are throwing their support behind *The X Factor* group hopefuls Rhythmix. The four-piece girl group, which features the college's former student Jade Thirlwall, won praise from the judges following their performance of Nicki Minaj's hit *Superbass* on the first live show last weekend.



## MP 'mends a hand' at Warwickshire College

Stratford-upon-Avon MP, Nadhim Zahawi, visited Warwickshire College to try his hand at sports massage and theatrical make-up, as part of the college's 'have a go' campaign.

Mr Zahawi met first-year theatrical make-up students and watched attentively as tutor, Tracey Bridger, made a prosthetic amputated thumb using carpet glue, cotton wool, honey and red food colouring. He then had a go at making one himself, using unsuspecting student, Demi Bailey as a model.

Mr Zahawi then had a go at sports massage alongside students from the second-year sports development course.

Mr Zahawi said: "I found my visit to Warwickshire College inspiring. The students and staff are clearly incredibly committed and made me feel very welcome.

"I was also heartened to hear that the government's commitment to fund more apprenticeships and vocational training places is working, with more students and employers taking up opportunities."



## Footballers Spur on Waltham Forest College

Waltham Forest College has joined forces with Tottenham Hotspur FC to tackle the problem of young people at risk of drifting away from work, education or training after leaving school.

The college and the football club have set up a programme for more than 50 talented young footballers which combines education with football training delivered by Spurs' academy coaches.

Tom Vittles, the college's curriculum manager for sport, said: "Learners are required to sign a code of conduct, and will not be allowed to train or play football unless they are up to date with their academic commitments."

Trevor Duberry, the club's community development officer, said: "We know that many

were unlikely to stay in education, and some had already fallen out of education. We have enticed them back in and this is an opportunity for them to stay engaged."

The students were paid a motivational visit by two young Tottenham players who have broken into the Premier League club's first team in European matches this season.

Harry Kane, 18, and Andros Townsend, 20, held a series of question and answer sessions with the students, giving advice on their nutrition and training regimes and revealed what inspired them to achieve as professional footballers.

Andros said: "This is a fantastic project for getting young people off the streets.

"If there were more programmes like this the world would be a much better place to live in."



## South Birmingham College laces up for Dr. Martens catalogue photoshoot



Iconic shoemaker Dr. Martens has used South Birmingham College for a new advertising campaign.

The company did a photoshoot for their Autumn Winter 2012 collection at the College's construction campus in Bordesley Green.

College staff and students were on site to ensure the crew had everything they needed and give advice on realistic poses for the models, who were trying to imitate vocational trades such as painting, bricklaying, and carpentry. Level 3 Carpentry student Martina Lyndon, 21, was helping with the shoot.

She said: "I've enjoyed helping them, showing them round and helping set up each shoot so that it looks as realistic as possible.

"It is great that students can get involved

with things like this – it makes me feel much more involved with the college."

The photos will be used worldwide in Dr. Martens' trade and consumer catalogues, as well as their print and online advertising.

Daniel Freeland from Dr. Martens, said: "South Birmingham College has been an ideal location for this photoshoot.

"We have been able to get shots of our new industrial footwear range in several different realistic trade settings. The campus here is very versatile with multiple environments so we have been able to get all our shots done in just two days."

The fee that Dr. Martens paid to use the facilities will be used to create an 'Endeavour Award' for students at the College.

## Apprenticeship fair for Harlow College



Young people alarmed by the recent spike in youth unemployment can take advantage of expert advice on entering the world of work when Harlow College plays host to Essex's first-ever apprenticeship fair today.

The unique event - which takes place inside the college's new University Centre Harlow building - will give would-be apprentices the chance to seek information and guidance from employers representing a diverse range of industries.

The college has recently helped set up apprenticeships with Harlow MP Rob Halfon and freelance education journalist Janet Murray. Deputy principal Sue Young said: "There are lots of myths about apprenticeships, from smaller companies thinking they're unable to afford them, to young people not fully understanding them and thinking they're only offered in certain jobs.

"By working with local employers, we want to unlock the untapped talent and potential in Harlow and further afield."

Mr Halfon, who last year became the first MP to appoint a paid apprentice, added: "Harlow College is not only one of the top UK colleges in England, but has also led the way in apprenticeships across the board."

## New art centre at Bournemouth & Poole College



Art and Design are about to take on a fresh hue with the opening of a brilliant new £1m art and design centre at Bournemouth & Poole College.

Remarkably, building work on the new block only began in May and it is being seen as a triumph of hard work and dedication of all the teams involved.

Colin Wills, estates manager at the college, said: "The building has been situated and created to make the most of 'northern light' which reduces glare, whilst providing soft and restful daylight for the artists."

"It looks fantastic inside and as word spreads I have no doubt it will attract some great young talent from our region."

College principal Lawrence Vincent said: "Using our own resources we have been able to create an inspirational environment for our talented students."

The first opportunity for potential students and parents as well as local people to check out the new centre will be on November 3 when an open evening is scheduled.



## Sheffield College music students perform for music video with UK rising star

Sheffield College music students have been given the chance to feature in a new music video by Maverick Sabre.

The MOBO Awards nominated singer has been visiting various colleges and asking music students to perform with him on his forthcoming single 'I Need'.

Mr Sabre will use the best performance for a new video that will coincide with the single's release on November 7.

The singer held the recording session at Norton College, part of The Sheffield College, on October 4.

Mr Sabre said. "I know there are hundreds of great young musicians across the country who just want a chance to show what they can do.

"I'm really pleased to give some of them an opportunity to get together and be part of a massive collaboration on 'I Need'."

Mr Sabre recorded several takes of the song with a student band, as well as smaller groups

of musicians.

Neil Anderton, Music Course Leader, Norton College, said: "The event was a huge success. Students were buzzing with excitement, rose to the challenge and worked very professionally.

"They gained an insight into working to industry standards given the tight deadline to produce quality material for commercial use, and enjoyed the question and answer sessions."

Mr Sabre later played an acoustic set for the students, and talked to them about his experiences in the music business.

Freya Sheldon, a student at Norton College, said: "He made it about the students, not just himself.

"This is the first time I have performed in a studio, and it was really interesting to see how it all worked. There were cameras everywhere, but after a while it felt really natural."

Mr Sabre will be visiting other music colleges including Norwich, Brighton, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow.

## Weston College laying future foundations



Bridges have been built between students and experts after Weston College teamed up with a major builders' merchants.

Weston College's Construction and Engineering Centre of Excellence (CECE) has joined with Bradfords as part of a package which will see the centre gain competitive rates for building materials and equipment as well as advice, support and training days.

Bradfords, of Winterstoke Road, in Weston-super-Mare, has already supplied the CECE team with around 30 high visibility jackets.

Construction lecturer Shaun Canniford said: "It's great news to team up with Bradfords. We have been given around £2,000 worth of materials so far and we are set to save around

30 per cent on usual costs."

Bradfords, which has an annual turnover of £150 million, was established 200 years ago and covers the South West, Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

Bradfords Weston-based Commercial Manager Ed Finch said: "We are proud to be working in partnership with Weston College as we believe the CECE is an excellent facility for learning and developing skills in the construction industry.

"Working closely with the college will allow Bradfords to build relationships with the next generation of tradespeople and help them make the transition when they leave education."



*FE Week events...*

# ‘Trials and tribulations’ feature at Lsect college data conference

**Nick Summers**  
@summersnicholas

Every year colleges are asked to change not only the data that they send to government, but the software and management tools which they use to collect it.

The Autumn College Data Conference held by Lsect was a chance for further education (FE) colleges to discuss good practise with experts and colleagues.

The main conference hall at Morley College was the perfect setting, attracting more than 100 delegates into its traditional architecture on October 10.

Exhibitors at the event included; Capita, who were marketing their Integrated Management Information System and answering delegates’ queries; Drake Lane Associates, known for producing software such as SCORE, 4CAST and ADaM; and Perspective, who were promoting a number of their products including Sunesis, Tracker and Funding Manager.

Nick Linford, Managing Director of Lsect and Managing Editor of *FE Week*, opened the proceedings before handing over to John Perks, Head of *the information authority*.

Mr Perks explained to the conference that the data burden was being reduced “throughout all of government”, and that it was designed to try and reduce both administration and the bureaucratic burden in the FE sector.

Mr Perks ran through the 2011/ 12 Individualised Learner Record (ILR) specification, explaining how it had brought together four data collection types for the very first time; learner responsive

funding, employer responsive funding, adult safeguarded funding and European social funding.

He added that there were an “awful lot of trials and tribulations” to changing ILRs, and said that he understood it looked like *the information authority* had “tried to fix something that wasn’t broken”.

However, Mr Perks stressed that the data collection types were “all due to go topsy-turvy anyway”, and that he felt it was “better to stay ahead of the game”.

One of the reasons why delegates had attended the event was to find out how ILRs would change in 2012/13, and how they as providers would need to change their data collection accordingly. Mr Perks explained that the new system in 2012/13 would only accept Extensible Markup Language (XML), rather than the traditional ‘flat file’ ILR.

He said that there would be no conversion facility available in the new Learner Information Suite (LIS), and therefore college staff would need to get accustomed to the latest system as soon as possible.

Other changes in 2012/13 included three fields set to be removed; provider number (UPIN), planned group based hours, and planned one to one hours, as well as an alteration in ULN validation, reducing the minimum duration of learning aims to 10 days.

“We have gone as far as we can go in terms of just changing the data allocation,” Mr Perks said.

“We want to make sure as far as possible that data allocated is data we will use.”

Mr Perks added that he had been under pressure from day one to reduce data in the ILR.

He said: “The most important thing is that we don’t throw out the baby with the bath water.

“Your college needs you, so make your voice heard.”

Rich Williams, Head of the Data Service continued the data conference with a presentation titled ‘Strategic replatforming of data collection systems’.

Mr Williams stressed that there had been important changes to FE funding arrangements recently, emphasising in particular how minimum contract values (MCVs) had put increased pressure on providers.

He said LIS had undergone a number of major changes, taking on board feedback from various beta versions which the Data Service had made available to the public.

Mr Williams announced that there would be a maintenance release for LIS on October 13, with a following patch for the Online Data Collections (OLDC) systems on October 23.

He also announced that the majority of providers had submitted their RO2 ILR return, which had been due on October 06. This included a return from 687 providers, with 1,738,000 aims for 528,464 learners.

Mr Williams said they would “completely replatform” the OLDC for the summer of 2012, using a portal approach based on SharePoint 2011.

“We’re planning to use the portal as a single one stop shop for you,” he said.

“Hopefully it will stand the test of time.”

He added that the new system would use Oracle Policy Automation (OPA), migrating from Oracle to SQL server and removing Provider Online (POL).

Mr Williams added that the Provider Information Management System (PIMS) would change to a Microsoft platform for “easier interfacing with other collections systems”, and include a redesign of the data structure in Dynamics 2011.

The conference then broke for lunch, giving attendees a chance to stretch their legs and speak to exhibitors.

Upon their return Mr Linford set up a Q&A panel with a number of the conference speakers, including John Perks and Rich Williams.

One delegate asked the panel if anyone was using the Next Step service, as he felt his own college wasn’t getting anything back from it.

John Perks replied: “The Next Step people have, and would say that their system is being used. We are addressing the question of evidence. We certainly want to see the data that is passing through Next Steps.

“We will be chasing that up.”

Mr Perks stressed that at the moment the feedback from Next Step had only been anecdotal, and that it would be unfair to generalise from specific case studies.

However, Mr Perks took a quick show of hands at the conference and found that roughly one in ten delegates thought the system was a complete waste of time.

Another delegate said that based on web traffic no-one had enrolled at his college via Next Step - and that as a result staff at the college were obliged to ignore the system altogether.

Mark Smith, Development Director at Drake Lane Associates and Mark Emerson, MIS Manager at Chelmsford College used the afternoon to take delegates through the



technical changes within LIS.

This included changes to field names, the structure of tables and their relationships.

Mark Smith said that table relationships had become much more complex, describing the system as a tree which “has grown much bigger”.

He added that to avoid errors college staff needed to check their results and validate report output multiple times. Mr Linford had a number of discussions throughout the day, talking about a mixture of updates in the FE sector such as changes to fee remission and the new 16-19 funding formula consultation announced by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) last week. In line with all Lsect conferences the event finished with survey feedback. The most

telling was the question: “Do you think data demands in the next few years will increase or decrease?”

Roughly 78 per cent said they thought the burdens of data handling would increase.

This reinforced not only just how important the issue of data handling is for FE colleges, but also the need for “simplification” in all aspects of data collection.

Only once providers start using the latest software and submitting ILRs will we know if the changes have been for the better.



The hall at Morley College was packed with college management information staff, eager for the latest data related news. They were not disappointed.

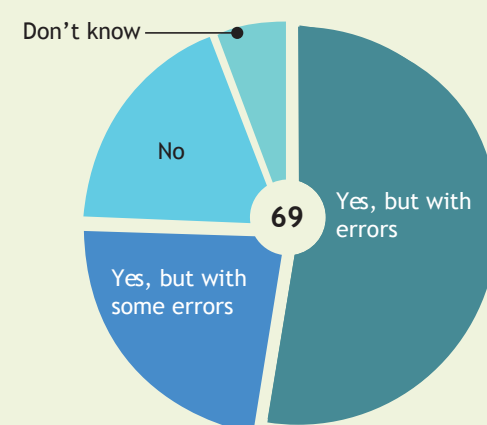


Rich Williams, head of the Data Service and John Perks, head of the information authority



### Delegate Survey

Did you submit R02 on time (by 6pm on the 6th October)?

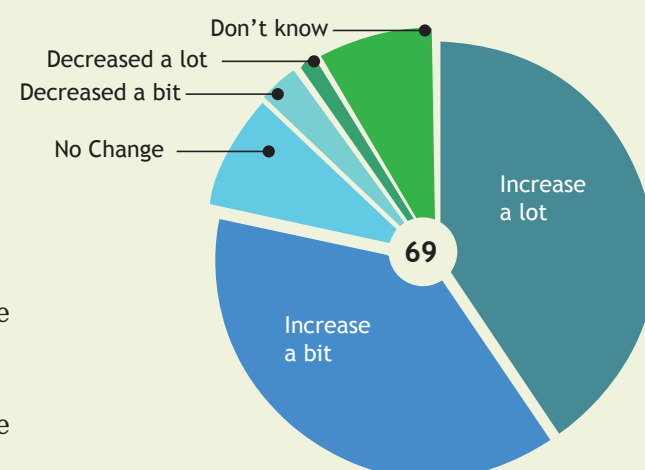


### Delegate Survey

Do you think data demands (volume/complexity/audit) in the next few years will increase or decrease?

78% say it will increase (incl. don't know)

86% say it will increase (excl. don't know)





# FE Week jobs

## Advertise!

If you wish to advertise in future editions of the paper, please email enquiries to [claire.edwards@feweek.co.uk](mailto:claire.edwards@feweek.co.uk)

For rates see our 'Advertise' section at [www.feweek.co.uk](http://www.feweek.co.uk)

You can find more job listings on the *FE Week* website:

[www.feweek.co.uk/index.php/jobs](http://www.feweek.co.uk/index.php/jobs)



### Contract Manager

Reynolds Training Academy are looking for an experienced Contract Manager responsible for monitoring / managing the SFA profiles, PICS Tracking system, student progress and meeting SFA funding requirements. Managing a small team to ensure the Academy's procedures are met and working as part of the Senior Management Team to continue to grow provision.

Experience of the PICS tracking system and PFA audit preferred however training can be provided for the right person. This is a full time post based in our Dartford Training Academy however the post will be expected to travel to our other locations in the South-East. If you would like more information on this role or to apply please email [sue@reynoldsgroup.co.uk](mailto:sue@reynoldsgroup.co.uk) with your CV and a covering letter. Closing date for applications 5pm on the 3rd November.

## Raising aspirations...



## ...exceeding expectations

Redcar & Cleveland College is a dynamic and progressive organisation. With the rapidly changing needs of employers, the College is investing in an exciting approach to business based delivery.

### Head of Employer Engagement

Ref 1112#06

Pay scale £34,474 - £41,199

Full Time, Permanent

An experienced and successful manager is required to lead the Employer Engagement team. You will promote the College as a major provider responsive to all aspects of Government, regional and local priorities and strategically develop the College's Employer Engagement programmes. You will have a proven track record of success in developing business opportunities relating to work based learning and apprenticeship programmes, together with significant experience of WBL funding methodology, bid writing and competitive tendering.

Details of this vacancy and all other vacancies can be found on our website. A College application form must be completed for all vacancies. Closing date for applications Monday 31 October 2011.

All applicants are subject to appropriate checks to ensure their suitability to work with vulnerable adults and children.



REDCAR & CLEVELAND COLLEGE

Call ☎ 01642 473132  
Click ➡ [www.cleveland.ac.uk](http://www.cleveland.ac.uk)  
Mail ✉ [personnel@cleveland.ac.uk](mailto:personnel@cleveland.ac.uk)



## Consultant

Drake Lane Associates specialise in software solutions, training and consultancy for the further education sector. Working with a wide range of organisations including all types of college, private training providers, local authorities, awarding bodies and audit companies, we are the leaders in our field.

Due to continuing growth we are now looking to appoint a consultant to work with our client base across the country. Initially the focus will be on leading 4cast software implementations, working both on and off-site with our client's management teams. However, the role will also involve demonstrations, data analysis and training clients in the best use of our software, sales follow-up.

Candidates applying for this role must have a good working knowledge of MIS in FE including data requirements, funding and external FE software (LIS, LARA, DSAT).

Although not essential, familiarity with our software - 4cast, SCORE & ADaM would be an advantage.

The successful candidate will be a detail conscious, pro-active self-starter with excellent communication skills and the flexibility to travel extensively, staying away when necessary.

It is anticipated that this role will develop further within the general area of 'Consultancy' and the person appointed will contribute to the further development of the business as a whole.

### Rewards

A competitive package including salary circa £35,000 (this will not be a limiting factor for an exceptional candidate) and 25 days holiday.

To apply please forward your C.V. together with a covering letter by email to: [jobs@drakelane.co.uk](mailto:jobs@drakelane.co.uk)

**SCORE**

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Innovative Solutions for Education Management  
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**Regional Procurement Manager**  
**(0.5 FTE appointment to commence January 2012 initially on a one year fixed term contract)**  
**Salary: £34,800 pa pro rata (£17,400 pa actual)**  
**Location: Nottingham**

The current economic climate has brought the need for colleges to maximise efficiencies into sharp focus.

This is an exciting opportunity for an experienced procurement manager, educated to degree level with a Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply professional qualification, to lead and manage the regional procurement service for colleges and undertake activities which will enable colleges to achieve efficiency savings and improve procurement capability.

You will be required to support the promotion of the procurement service with the aim of generating sufficient income to sustain the post in the longer term and to develop a business plan to support this.

If you are an experienced procurement manager with a proven track record of leading high level negotiations and procurement processes including experience of running OJEU tenders we are keen to hear from you.

For further details please contact Tracy Roser, EMFEC, Robins Wood House, Robins Wood Road, Aspley, Nottingham, NG8 3NH. Tel: 0115 8541628 Email: tracyr@emfec.co.uk

Closing date for applications: 5.00 pm on Monday 7 November 2011  
 Interviews will be held on Monday 21 November 2011



**LEARNING TECHNOLOGIST – 37 hours**

**Ref: LRC 01/11**

**Starting salary £19,473 with potential for incremental progression subject to performance to £20,655**

We are looking for a confident, enthusiastic and highly motivated individual with excellent communication and interpersonal skills to be responsible for the development and implementation of digital learning technologies.

Specifically the successful candidate will develop high quality multimedia learning objects, manage the development of a digital repository, the development of the College's Virtual Learning Environment and support teaching staff in the use of digital technologies to enrich curriculum delivery.

Applicants should possess HNC / D or equivalent preferably in a digital / computing or related discipline along with a minimum of 5 GCSE's or equivalent. It would be advantageous if you have previous experience of a role involving supporting development virtual environments and of other learning technologies in an education / training environment.

To apply online and to download further information about the role please logon to the college website [www.lwc.ac.uk/vacancies](http://www.lwc.ac.uk/vacancies)

Closing Date: Friday 21 October 2011 (12:00 noon)

Interview Date: Thursday 3 November 2011

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## Director of Curriculum (Quality and Operations)

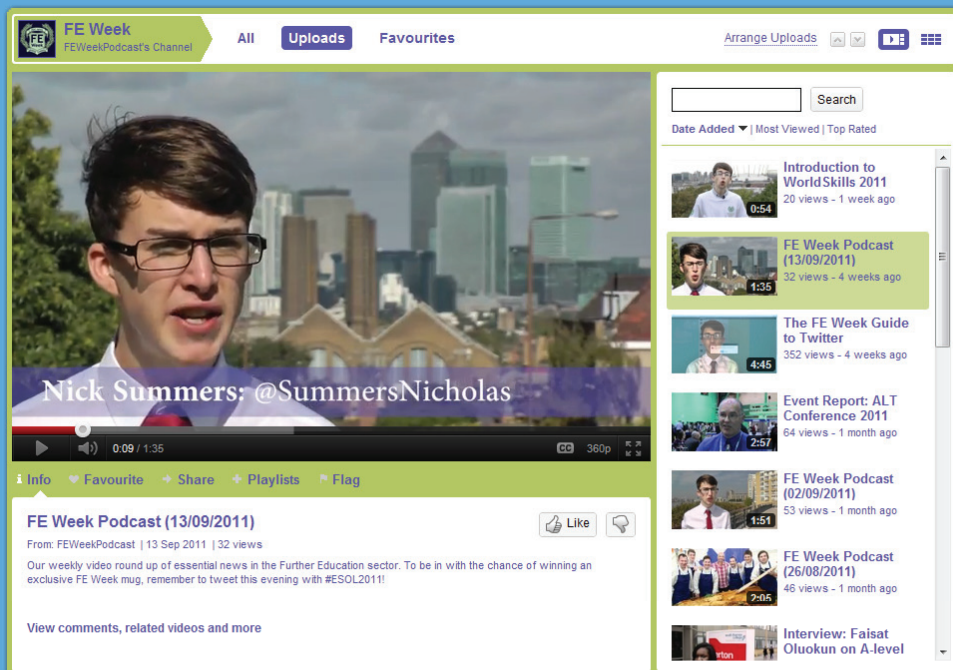
**Salary: £45,669 to £48,198**

Director of Curriculum (Quality and Operations) Salary: £45,669 to £48,198 inclusive of London Weighting Sutton College is a popular and successful FE and Adult Education provider in South London where difference is recognised and understood, diversity is celebrated and encouraged, strengths are promoted and developed, weaknesses are supported and overcome. This key post, reporting directly to the Deputy Principal, will provide an exciting opportunity for emotionally intelligent professionals wishing to expand their management and leadership skills. The post will provide opportunities to establish innovative ways of leading and managing learning as well as allowing the development of creative approaches and solutions which will further raise standards and create a climate of success for everyone. You will join the senior team of a dynamic and thriving college. Your personal input will play a major role in shaping the future for committed students and dedicated staff. If you believe you have the vision and expertise to make a significant contribution to our success, we would like to hear from you. For an informal discussion about the post please contact Deputy Principal- Jenny Sims on 020 8770 6912

### Other Information:

Job Title: Director of Curriculum (Quality and Operations)  
 Salary: £45,669 to £48,198 inclusive on London Weighting  
 Start date: Immediately Contract: Full time,  
 Permanent Deadline: Noon 31 Oct 2011 email: [jobs@scola.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@scola.ac.uk)

Selection date : 4th or 9th Nov 2011  
 Website: [www.scola.ac.uk](http://www.scola.ac.uk)  
 To download information pack: [www.scola.ac.uk/jobs](http://www.scola.ac.uk/jobs)



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[www.youtube.com/feweekpodcast](http://www.youtube.com/feweekpodcast)

Don't forget you can get involved with *FE Week* on social media too!



## Caption competition

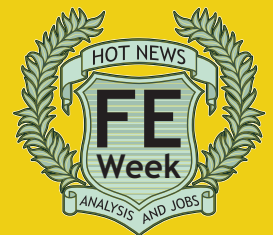
We want to hear your caption ideas for this great photo of Boris, changing a sprocket at Worldskills.

Send your entries to  
[competitions@feweek.co.uk](mailto:competitions@feweek.co.uk)

The winner will receive an *FE Week* winner's mug

## FE PR AND NEW MEDIA CONFERENCE

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**Monday  
November 28  
London**

Find out about:

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- ~ Making the most of facebook and twitter
- ~ How to produce high quality video content
- ~ Ensuring your press release and photo gets published
- ~ Harness the power and simplicity of Wordpress



See [www.lsect.com](http://www.lsect.com) for further details

## FE Week Wordsearch

F	E	L	T	L	E	M	S	J	S	F	W	P	X	E
Q	C	N	R	P	N	Y	T	G	J	W	Z	I	Z	T
T	I	I	K	L	L	J	U	J	W	Y	A	A	W	B
Z	T	C	H	F	U	N	D	I	N	G	K	I	Q	C
P	N	X	O	E	Z	W	E	Q	N	F	T	J	O	S
E	E	S	G	L	C	U	N	Z	Y	T	T	Z	E	C
I	R	I	L	D	L	Q	T	N	E	Y	E	Z	C	U
H	P	X	C	L	S	E	O	R	E	H	T	R	U	F
W	P	I	J	K	I	I	G	H	R	S	L	N	H	F
C	A	G	L	C	T	K	S	E	Z	V	H	D	P	F
S	S	Z	F	A	J	X	S	A	O	F	X	S	M	S
A	U	F	C	B	M	E	B	N	H	G	L	Y	T	U
F	Q	U	V	O	N	K	W	W	M	W	S	V	K	C
Z	D	D	G	M	N	X	C	P	D	D	G	V	T	U
E	F	R	N	X	B	T	J	B	I	W	Y	G	O	D

APPRENTICE  
COLLEGE  
EDUCATION  
FUNDING  
FURTHER  
SKILLS  
STUDENT  
TWITTER

Take a coffee break and see if you can find the  
*FE* related words in this week's wordsearch!

There are 8 words to find and they appear  
forwards, backwards, up, down and diagonally  
on the grid.

Good Luck!

## FE Week mini-mascot

Follow the adventures of *FE Week's*  
biggest and smallest fan!

*"Mostly this week I have been  
hitching a lift on my dad's  
back"*

You can also follow our *FE Week*  
mini-mascot on Twitter  
[@daniellinford](https://twitter.com/daniellinford)

